11.0 Summary

The South La Crosse Transportation Study was initiated to identify a common long-term vision for the South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road corridor in the City of La Crosse and the Town of Shelby. In addition, the study also looked at the timing of planned improvements along US 14/61 and WIS 35 South in the Town of Shelby.

The South Avenue/Mormon Coulee Road corridor is beginning to experience increased delay and congestion as traffic volumes increase. A few of the intersections and some roadway segments are beginning to experience congestion and intersection operation issues. If projected traffic volumes are realized, many more intersections and segments are anticipated to experience delay and congestion. Increased delay and congestion can result in increased crashes at intersections that currently operate safely, as well as trip diversion to other routes as motorists avoid the corridor.

In addition to the No-build Alternative, a range of mainline alternatives were developed as part of the study process for the urban segment of the corridor including:

- Four-lane Variable Width Median Alternative − This alternative consisted of a four-lane divided urban facility with a median extending along the entire length of the corridor. The median would vary in width from four feet to 20 feet with the widest portion located near intersections to accommodate left-turn lanes.
- Five-lane Two-Way-Left-Turn-Lane (TWLTL) Alternative − This alternative is very similar to what currently exists along Mormon Coulee Road south of East/Ward Avenue. It would extend the TWLTL facility along South Avenue north of East/Ward Avenue, bring the existing facility up to WisDOT standards, and provide short medians at intersections to safely separate left-turn lanes from through traffic. Access along the corridor would be accommodated via a 14 foot center TWLTL.
- Hybrid Alternative − The Hybrid Alternative is a combination of both the Four-lane Variable Width Median and the Five-lane TWLTL Alternatives. North of East/Ward Avenue, South Avenue would be a four-lane facility with a variable width median. South of East/Ward Avenue, Mormon Coulee Road would be a TWLTL facility very similar to the current conditions with short medians at the signalized intersections to separate left-turn lanes.

All of the mainline alternatives included pedestrian and multi-modal accommodations such as a wide 14 foot outside travel lane for shared use with bike traffic. The alternatives also included a five foot terrace to separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic on the corridor, and six foot sidewalks. In addition, the mainline alternatives included an analysis and recommendation of access management techniques to promote the safe and efficient operation of the corridor. The mainline alternatives were developed to operate efficiently under year 2030 traffic volumes.

The US 14/61/WIS 35 intersection was also included within the scope of the study and included a systems approach to determine long-term option for this

portion of the corridor. The system approach included analyzing 33rd Street, Old Town Hall Road, Riverview Drive, and Sunnyside Drive. A total of six intersection alternatives were developed for the intersection.

The study included an analysis of the timing of improvements for the rural segments of the corridor. A plan to reconstruct US 14/61 to a four-lane facility was completed several years ago. Changes in WisDOT policy regarding improvement projects, resulted in the need to reexamine the need for implementation of the plan.

The WIS 35 South corridor is tentatively scheduled for reconstruction as a four-lane facility in 2010, and is expected to exceed the WisDOT FDM threshold for a two-lane facility some time near 2025. The US 14/61 corridor would likely exceed the WisDOT threshold sometime after 2030.